

**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at the Jubilee Institute in Rothbury.**

<b>PRESENT:</b>	Clive Wilkinson	CW	President
	Geoff Hoskin	GH	Chair
	Lesley Patterson	LP	Treasurer
	John Rutherford	JR	Group Convenor Co-ordinator
	Averil Fendley	AF	Membership secretary
	Chris Cann	CC	Publicity secretary
	Pete Burrow	PB	Social Activities secretary
	Ian Webb	IW	Website and communications secretary
	Pauline Wilson	PW	Business secretary
	42		Coquetdale U3A members

**1). Welcome and Introduction**

GH welcomed U3A members to the 2019 Coquetdale AGM and thanked members for coming. There was a special thanks and presentation to Anne Webb, in appreciation for her contribution to the committee on which she served for 6 years. Anne continues to host the Art Appreciation Group and is planning a trip to the Laing Gallery in May if there is sufficient interest.

GH also paid tribute to David Richardson who died recently. David was a founder member of the U3A. He and his wife Wendy moved to Ripon some years ago.

**2). Apologies for absence: None**

**3). Minutes of the last meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2018**

These were taken as a correct record. Copies were available at the end of each row, and are also available for inspection in the minute file.

**4). Chair's Report**

GH reported that it had been a very busy and successful year in Coquetdale and membership has increased. This was down to people's commitment and enthusiasm, not just committee members but group convenors and ordinary members as well. The monthly meetings have been well attended with a wide range of speakers every month except one which had to be cancelled where there had been a breakdown in communication and the speaker not being available on the day. At some of the meetings there have been presentations by members themselves: Poetry and Music; Photography, John Lewis on the lure of mathematics and at the January meeting we were entertained by Brendon and Chrissie Buckley with local music. This reflects the talent that we have within our local community.

GH reported that the inaugural annual lecture given by Clive Wilkinson had been a huge success and there is another planned for this year.

GH also said that the new venture into social activities has also been very successful. However, we need to be mindful of the regulations around the extra income coming into the U3A from these activities, as if it exceeds £5k we will have to register the U3A with the Charities Commission. The committee is investigating further so that we can comply with the Trust governance principles without being over bureaucratic.

GH also reminded members about the North Northumberland network with Wooler, Alnwick and Berwick U3As. Members are free to attend their meetings.

The committee has made the decision to retain the annual membership fee at £10. This includes the monthly meetings but there are additional expenses for other groups which involve room hire. During 2019/2020 it is the intention that the committee has a better understanding of these other costs including money taken for beverages. This is to ensure compliance and security for those who handle other U3A monies.

GH thanked the committee members and the convenors for their hard work. He also thanked those who work behind the scenes, Pat Maloney who gives IT support and sets up the room; Kay Evans for providing the refreshments, and the president Clive Wilkinson for being a sounding board and giving wise counsel. He thanked the Jubilee Institute for providing such an excellent venue. Pat has been providing IT support from the beginning of our U3A and now has support from Bernard Harvey.

#### **5). Treasurer's Report**

LP tabled the year end accounts which have been audited by Larry Lampert. She wished to 'place on record' a special thanks to Larry who has carried out this duty both timely and efficiently every year. As of 31/03/19, Coquetdale U3A has receipts of £6979.51. Most of the income comes from membership subscriptions which this year are £1575, reflecting the lower annual charge. £411.67 is from donations and beverages.

The payments made are mostly the capitation fee of £3.50 per head which amounts to £493.50 and the hall rental of £460.50; this was for the monthly meetings plus the annual lecture. LP acknowledged that there are groups who book the Jubilee Institute and pay separately. There are other groups again – table tennis and ceilidh dancing which use different venues. These are not currently shown on the balance sheet and the committee will be reviewing this approach for compliance with the Trust regulations.

There are receipts of £2281 for theatre trips and payments of £2198. These are not the same because of dates required to make final payments. During the year there were additional costs for administration and the annual quiz buffet. Coquetdale U3A made a donation of £50 to Over the Bridges. We have a final balance of £3209.62.

This year LP said that she will open a separate account for social activities and explore legitimate ways of channelling this through clearing agencies to avoid having to register with the Charities Commission.

## **6). Officers' Reports**

### **Business secretary**

PW described the role of business secretary which does not require specific secretarial skills. Committee meetings are held bi-monthly. She is also the regional link. Our region is the NE Region and this year workshops have been held for succession planning, treasurers' Q&As and for group co-ordinators. These workshops are exclusively for committee members but there are also regional events for everyone. PW attended a study day in September at the Centre for Life. This involved looking at bacteria through a microscope and assessing the effectiveness of pro-biotic yogurts.

### **Group Convenor Co-ordinator**

JR reported that some of the groups are very active while some have been dormant. The bird watching group which was dormant now has a new convenor. The new 'veggie' group is doing well. There are now 2 book groups. He encouraged members to take the plunge and open new groups or discuss ideas with him. Support will always be available for new groups.

### **Membership Secretary**

AF reported that there are now 160 members. She thanked members for prompt renewal of membership. As part of her role she explained that she sends out information for people who move into the area and have expressed an interest in joining. She has also secured safe disposal of membership data with a firm in Hexham to comply with GDPR.

### **Publicity Secretary**

CC reported that there is little change from last year. She continues to display posters around Rothbury and beyond. She also continues to advertise the monthly meetings in Over the Bridges and twice a year provides additional information about U3A activities. We have a Facebook page which is linked to the website and there are 38 followers. There is greater exposure in the Rothbury and Coquetdale Past and Present forum where there are 6000 members. She stated that pieces of information from groups would help gain more exposure on Facebook, such as the book of the month from the book group.

### **Website and Communications Secretary**

IW reported that the website continues to be updated. He is grateful for support from David Tanner. There is now a banner headline running across the home page and a tab for social activities. He requested photos from members so that the front page could be refreshed. There have been 5000 hits for the front page, 2000 for groups, 1500 for news and 1150 for the post box. IW stated that a 'teach in' was offered for group coordinators so that they could post information about individual group activities but there was low uptake. He is willing to give individual tuition and support during the coming year.

### **Social Activities Secretary**

PB reported that at last year's AGM members were surveyed in relation to what social activities they wanted. 22 people responded and a small team was formed originally comprising the chair, Jen Homer, Anne Webb and Tony Henry in order to implement the top three social activity interests. This has resulted in a very successful Christmas Quiz held at

the Golf Club plus outings to a ballet and opera at the Theatre Royal. There are bookings for another ballet plus the show 'Les Miserables' and the play 'An Inspector calls'. The community bus has been used so ticket numbers have been limited to 17. There will be a trip to Newby Hall in June where a mobility scooter can be booked and a visit is planned to Edinburgh in September and numbers have been taken to book for 'The Marriage of Figaro' next year. PB said that he plans to 'go big' and include popular shows such as 'Mama Mia', 'The Mouse Trap' and 'We will rock you'. It was suggested that he use the Alnwick Playhouse when refurbishment is complete and the Maltings at Berwick, although this is further to travel in the evenings. PB also had information about musical events at Paxton House and members were asked to express their interest at the end of the meeting. He is also looking for members to help with the organisation of the social activities.

#### **7). Election of Committee**

CW as president presided over the election of the committee members. There was a unanimous show of hands for re-election of the chair and committee members. As AW stood down as social activities secretary part way through the year, Pete Burrow was co-opted to this post. He was given unanimous approval by the members. CW thanked GH and the committee members for their work throughout the year.

#### **8). The Coming Year.**

GH said that he had felt a bit like a benign dictator during the last year but wanted Coquetdale U3A to think beyond the local community and broaden horizons. He said that his tenure as chair will come to an end after next year so he wants to continue with succession planning and urges members to think about what they can offer as there are many talents which can be exploited. If members do not step up to take on committee roles Coquetdale U3A could fold. He concluded by wishing members an enjoyable year with a varied programme of monthly meetings, lots of groups to join and a range of social activities to enjoy.

#### **9). Any Other Business – Questions**

There were no further questions. Members' questions were addressed during the presentations.

The meeting was followed by a demonstration of ceilidh dancing.